

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMCONSUL TANGIER

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3380

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANGIER 0164

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AG MO MR PBOR PINT PFOR

SUBJECT: SAHARAN YOUTH HOLD FIRST CONGRESS AT TANGIER

1. SUMMARY. THE FIRST CONGRESS OF YOUNG SAHARAN PROFESSIONALS AND STUDENTS TOOK PLACE IN TANGIER ON APRIL 23 AND 24. WHILE THE PARTICIPANTS SPENT MOST OF THEIR TIME REAFFIRMING THEIR LOYALTY TO HASSAN II AND PROCLAIMING THEIR ENMITY FOR THE "ILLEGAL" ALGERIAN REGIME, THEY STRESSED THE IMPOVERISHED CONDITIONS THAT PREVAIL IN THE SAHARA AND CALLED ON MOROCCO TO HELP THEM OVERCOME THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STAGNATION LEFT BEHIND BY THE SPANISH. END SUMMARY.

2. THE TWO-DAY GATHERING BROUGHT TOGETHER YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FROM THE SAHARA AND SAHARANS STUDYING IN MOROCCO, SPAIN AND THE CANARY ISLANDS. IN ALL THERE WERE ABOUT 100 YOUNG SAHARANS IN ATTENDANCE AND THOSE WITH WHOM I TALKED STATED THAT ALL OF THEIR EXPENSES WERE BEING PAID
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BY THE MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT. WHILE THE GOVERNOR AND

OTHER PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSIONS, JUST ABOUT EVERYONE OF ANY IMPORTANCE IN THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FROM THE GOVERNOR ON DOWN ATTENDED THE THREE AND ONE-HALF HOUR OPENING SESSION FRIDAY MORNING AND WERE AGAIN IN ATTENDANCE AT THE EQUALLY LONG CLOSING SESSION SATURDAY EVENING. THE CONSULAR CORPS WAS CONVOKED BY THE GOVERNOR TO ATTEND BOTH OF THESE SESSIONS AS AN INDICATION OF THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED TO THE CONGRESS. UNFORTUNATELY THE PROCEEDINGS WERE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN ARABIC AND NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO TRANSLATE ANY OF THE SPEECHES, AN OVERSIGHT ON SOMEBODY'S PART IF THE PARTICIPANTS HOPED TO HAVE THEIR PROCEEDINGS REPORTED BACK TO THE GOVERNMENTS REPRESENTED. THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE JEMAA, OULD EL BACHIR, WAS ALSO PRESENT AT THE OPENING AND CLOSING SESSIONS BUT DID NOT PARTICIPATE.

3. THE ENDLESS SPEECHES, I AM TOLD, STRESSED THE UNDYING LOYALTY OF THE YOUTH OF THE SAHARA TO THE KING OF MOROCCO AND APPLAUDED HIS BOLD SUCCESS IN BRINGING THE SAHARA BACK TO THE "MOTHER LAND." THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT CAME IN FOR CONSIDERABLE ABUSE AND WAS CONSTANTLY REFERRED TO AS THE "ILLEGAL GOVERNMENT" OF ALGERIA. IN THEIR FINAL RESOLUTIONS (FRENCH AND SPANISH TRANSLATIONS OF WHICH WERE HAPPILY PROVIDED) THE ALGERIAN REGIME WAS ROUNDLY CONDEMNED FOR VIOLATING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE SAHARA AND PARTICULARLY FOR MANIPULATING THEIR "PEONS," THE SO CALLED POLISARIO, INTO "SUICIDE OPERATIONS" WHICH "MENACE THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF THE MAGHREB." THEY WENT ON TO PROCLAIM THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE ALGERIAN LEADERS IN EXILE AND PROMISED THEM THEIR HELP IN OUSTING THE ILLEGAL REGIME. THE OAU WAS INVITED TO RESPECT ITS OBLIGATIONS TO THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ITS MEMBER STATES AND NOT TO LEND ITS SUPPORT TO SEPARTIST GROUPS. THE YOUNG SAHARANS, HOWEVER, WERE QUICK TO ADD THAT THEY UNCONDITIONALLY SUPPORTED LIBERATION MOVEMENTS ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA*

4. ALSO ON THE POLITICAL FRONT, THE PARTICIPANTS DECLARED THEY WILL FIGHT WITH THE MOROCCAN PEOPLE UNTIL ALL MOROCCAN TERRITORIES STILL UNDER ALGERIAN AND SPANISH

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DOMINATION ARE RECOVERED AND SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED TINDOUF, TOUAT, GOURARAT, TIDIGLIT AND THE REGION OF BECHAR AS WELL AS THE SPANISH ENCLAVES OF CEUTA AND MELILLA. THEY FURTHER STRESSED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIANS AND CALLED ON THE ARAB WORLD TO MOBILIZE ITS STRENGTH FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE AND TO AVOID INTERNAL QUARRELS WHICH ONLY "PROFIT THE ZIONIST ENEMY."

5. THE CHALLENGES THROWN OUT BY THE YOUNG SAHARANS WERE NOT ENTIRELY DIRECTED TOWARD ALGERIA AND THE ARAB WORLD. THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS ALSO CHALLENGED THEIR MOROCCAN HOSTS TO TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEFICIENCIES OF THE SAHARA AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM. AFTER RECALLING IN BLUNT LANGUAGE THE "SYSTEMATIC PILLAGE OF THEIR RESOURCES" AND THE "SYSTEMATIC PAUPERISATION OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE" BY THE SPANISH, THEY CALLED ON MOROCCO TO HELP THEM (1) DEVELOP THEIR AGRICULTURE PARTICULARLY THROUGH REFORESTATION AND IRRIGATION, (2) CREATE LOCAL INDUSTRIES, (3) EXPLOIT THEIR FISHERIES RESOURCES, (4) EXPLORE THEIR MINERAL RESOURCES AND (5) DEVELOP THEIR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY. ON THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL FRONT THEY ASKED FOR SCHOOLS AT ALL INSTRUCTIONAL LEVELS, THE IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HOSPITALS, AND MORE JOBS SO THE PEOPLE CAN ENJOY A BETTER STANDARD OF LIVING. THEY FURTHER APPEALED TO THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAHARA TO ESTABLISH AN ADMINISTRATION THERE THAT WILL BE CAPABLE OF OVERCOMING THE GENERAL STAGNATION LEFT BEHIND BY COLONIALISM.

6. COMMENT. THE PARTICIPANTS WERE BRIGHT AND ATTRACTIVE AND SEEMED MUCH MORE WILLING TO CHAT AT THE CLOSING SESSION THAN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CONGRESS. I CAME AWAY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY HOPED THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, POLITICAL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES AND LABOR AND STUDENT LEADERS PRESENT WOULD REMEMBER NOT ONLY THE PATRIOTIC RHETORIC THAT SEEMED TO CONSUME SO MUCH OF THE CONGRESS BUT ALSO THEIR APPEAL FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.
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